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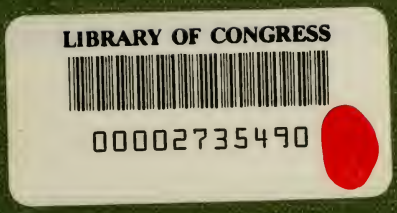

"Why Leonard Wood"

?

ANOTHER LETTER

to

HIRAM FREEBORN

(*Privately Printed*)

NEW YORK

March 15th, 1920

Mem: In answer to inquires, Hiram Freeborn still resides everywhere, all over the United States. Some thought he had moved away. This was an error. After persuading the Administration to declare war he also fought the war, financed the war, and despite the encumbrance of the Administration's office-holders, conducted the business end of the war. He also voted multitudinously in November, 1918, thereby doing all in his power to save Europe from the disasters (now occurring) with which it was threatened by its official adherence to our dreamy Administration. Owing to the seizure of the cables and the suppression of all information he was forced into seclusion while secret covenants were secretly arrived at. Upon the results thereof being made public he has emerged throughout the United States and is contending for the prevalence of American principles in contradistinction to the murky derangements of the moral sentiments offered as panaceas for evils inherent to the existence of the human race. As heretofore he can be addressd at any Post Office in the United States.

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Gift
Author
MAR 13 1929

New York, March 15th, 1920.

Hiram Freeborn, Esq.,

United States of America.

Dear Hiram:—

Your question has gone too long unanswered. Like yourself I saw in the newspaper the letter published under the heading "Why Dr. Wood?" Why indeed Dr. Wood? Certainly not for any one particular reason. Certainly not because he is a member of that learned profession which guards the health of mankind. That is no reason for electing a man President of the United States. It was not unthoughtful, however, of the writer of that letter to label him with the title *"Dr."* for it brings to mind that the one affirmative objection, which the unthinking among his opponents would possibly urge against him, does not exist. It is said that there is a prejudice against electing a Regular Army Officer. To be sure when one comes to think of it Gen. Grant was a Regular Army Officer and so far as soldiers being President is concerned Washington and Jackson, Harrison and four or five others had smelled powder. Indeed some of them, Washington for example, had been soldiers for long periods of time. Jefferson was not a soldier, he was pacific and got us into war by not being firm (other pacific people have on occasion done the same, in one country or another, according to history). Nevertheless though not a Regular Army Officer Leonard Wood should not be elected President because he took care of the health of a certain number of American citizens and, later, of a troop of cavalry in the arid regions on service against Indian tribes in insurrection. Nor because, when he found there was greater need for cavalry officers than for doctors, he resigned the one commission and undertook the greater duty of the other. Nor again because he performed his duties creditably under that new commission. Nor because he served in the Spanish War as the Colonel of Mr. Roosevelt's Rough Riders until he was made Governor of the Philippines. Nor be-

cause he governed the Philippines successfully. Nor because greater peace, prosperity and order came into being than had been deemed possible under the conditions that existed in those islands. Nor because while accomplishing this he earned the respect and confidence of a dozen or more barbarous tribes whose characteristics, interests and development, all varied the one from the other. Nor because for two years he governed Cuba. Nor because without the exercise of force or the taking of autocratic measures, peace and prosperity reigned in Cuba to a degree which the island had never known. Nor because he found the Cuban treasury empty and left it overflowing. Nor because this was done by economy and not through onerous taxation. Nor because the Cubans respected him and each other and discovered how to live and let live as peaceful citizens of a prosperous Republic. Nor because he foresaw that Germany would force us to war. Nor because he foresaw what would be our greatest need in war and had the wisdom and energy to create the military training camps. Nor because it thereby became possible for us, when war came, to increase the size and multiply the number of officers' training camps while adhering to the plans he had put in operation, whereby we put into the field the most creditably officered, democratic army, that was ever raised and officered. Nor because he so trained a division that it was conceded that he had produced 40,000 soldiers. Nor because those 40,000 were disappointed by a jealous administration and not allowed to have their own general with them that they might do under his eye, that duty for which he had prepared them. Nor because he trained another 40,000 men so that the French and British inspection officers, fresh from the trenches, spoke of them with admiration and said that they were trained to the minute and were an army:—and added that they had the most efficient working staff that had come under their notice in any American division. Nor because he is the only officer of the United States Army above the rank of Colonel who was wounded in the line of duty in France. Nor because he, with Elihu Root, Henry Cabot Lodge and Robert Bacon (now no longer with us) constituted the four close and intimate friends of Theodore Roosevelt in whose judgment and opinion it is understood Mr. Roosevelt placed reliance. Nor because he is simple of habit and of plain and understandable

speech. Nor because he is of directness and clarity of thought. Nor because it is the testimony of those who have been in daily contact with him that he possesses an unvaried patience and self control. Nor because of the primary deduction which flows from what has been said concerning the two army divisions he had charge of. For it is but fair to say that no single individual can personally train 40,000 men at a time. He must have many associated with him in the work. Unless he has an innate capacity for the wise selection of associates and the capacity to imbue them with a spirit of enthusiasm for the work, with a spirit of co-operation and with the ideal of loyalty to the enterprise, the result sought will not be attained. No qualities are more important in an executive than these. No one man can personally conduct the affairs of one hundred and ten millions of people. He must have many associates. To succeed he must have this capacity for wisely selecting persons fitted for the work of conducting a sane government. He must have the capacity of imbuing them with a sense of loyal devotion to their duty. On his capacity to mould them into a real staff of associates and assistants depends the welfare of the land. The facts have demonstrated the existence of these qualities and capacities in Leonard Wood. It is the secret of success in a Chief Executive.

I might go on giving you a thousand more reasons for no single one of which should Leonard Wood be nominated as the Republican candidate at Chicago and elected President of the United States. The only question, should you ask it, that I cannot answer, would be, whether possibly for all these reasons together (and some others) it might not be safest and sanest at this particular conjuncture to both nominate and elect him. There is practically no doubt but that the Republican nominee will be elected, provided always, that he be sane and safe. A weariness has come over the land. We are tired of the unknown and the experimental. We shrink from further voyages into the fog-bound regions of national disruption. We distrust all autocrats of the lecture room. Even more are we tired of having old panaceas revamped and put forward as new solutions for the woes of humanity. Panaceas that have been tried out a dozen times in recorded history, and hundreds of times before in the non-recorded history of the human race. Panaceas

which have been at times advanced in almost the same terms, and at times in terms that vary, but always with the same result, bitter disillusion at the end. Never yet has the world failed to pay the price when it has followed the vagaries of impractical idealism. Of idealism which leaves out of account the inherent human factors, which requires that it be presupposed that contrary to all human experience all men can and will, at the waving of a magic wand, become good. That requires that the instinct of self preservation—the trait which finds expression in almost every action of the human being—shall be deemed to be eliminated from the human concept. Idealism which betrays when it does not kill.

Not from the murky clouds of confused and deranged moral sentiments come peace and prosperity. They come, for a nation, from wisdom of administration and from the existence of simplicity of thought, plainness of speech, directness of intent, firmness of judgment, and resolute action when action is necessary. Neither will peace and prosperity come to these United States in this first quarter of the twentieth century if the chief executive be the representative of a faction within a political party, even though that faction temporarily dominate such party. The candidate of the Republican party must be a man who is not steeped in the prejudices of any faction within the party. You will have noticed that I assume that the Republican candidate will be our next President. It is because the United States of America is through with the Democrats—I had almost said forever. But not forever if the Republican party misbehave in office. The history of the last sixty years has been, that the people do not trust the Democratic party to govern the land, and only put it into power from time to time when the Republican party has committed itself to some faction within itself, in which necessarily the country as a whole has not confidence. For this reason, if for none other, the Republican nominee must be a man who will be the President of the Nation not the leader of a wing of a Party.

There is an underlying reason why the country recognizes the general incapacity of those who constitute the Democratic party to suitably perform the functions of government. That reason is experience. And there is a reason why the Democratic party is incompetent to govern. Men's minds, speaking of minds in the mass, can be divided along many lines of demarcation. One promi-

nent line of demarcation is between "the practical" and "the idealistic." Not that practical men have not ideals, not that all idealists are utterly unpractical, but, speaking at large, the practical side tends to eliminate, or, its existence tends to negative, the existence of a preponderance of the ideal in a given mind. So also a preponderance of the idealistic in a given mind (as we all know in our daily experience) is largely incompatible with the existence of any great amount of the practical in that mind or character. Here another human rule comes into play. Those who at large feel and think more or less alike tend to drift together, as well in political parties, as in social intercourse. Thence it follows that in one political party you will find a preponderance of idealism and idealists and in another a preponderance of the practical minded people. Need one argue that government is largely a practical question? That the supplying of the people with their daily food, the establishing of conditions which will lead to prosperity, the seeing to it that order prevails without necessity for the exercise of violence, the foreseeing the future, the guarding against danger—the thousand things which constitute the art of government—fall more largely within the realm of the practical than within that of the ideal? How comes it that our merchants, our engineers, our railroad men, and all those who "keep the country going" are practical men, and that our college professors, our clergymen, our directors of benevolent institutions and those who fill similar needs and uses are more or less idealists, if it be not true that the material side of life is confided by natural selection to the more practical rather than to the dreamers, and must so be if human life is to continue and to advance and if there is to be peace and prosperity instead of wild disorder and confusion? The dreamer would, for example, have the people educated in art and beauty. But it is the practical man who founds the art museum and donates a million dollars to its up-keep. The dreamer has the vision and can be trusted to select the contents of the museum, but he cannot put the vision into execution nor administer the fund which supports the museum. The material side of the enterprise would go to ruin under his management. The practical man has however, quite some vision or he would not be willing to supply the wherewithal to enable the idealist's hope to find its material expression.

Governing a country and dreaming of an art museum are two wholly separate employments and the mind adapted to the latter is not fit for the first. In the Democratic party we find, by the operation of natural law, that there is a preponderance of theorists, of idealists, of dreamers. The names of the two parties are of no significance. They might be called "Party A" and "Party B." Whatever they were called you would find in the one a majority of "dreamers," in the other, a majority of those who accomplish. The Democratic party always needs a new law to remedy an old case. The Republican party always finds that some existing law covers the particular relation of one human being to another which arises. The Democratic party dreams and theorizes and has to be forced to act. The Republican party goes out and accomplishes. The Democratic party is unable to function when a crisis arises (unless the Republicans turn to and out of loyalty and good citizenship help it out). The Republican party on the other hand welcomes a crisis as the average human being welcomes battle, with joy in the knowledge that effort is required of it. All this must not be deemed mere criticism of the Democratic party—it is recital of well known fact. Nor is it sought to discriminate, favorably or unfavorably as to the one or the other of these two types of mind. Each type has its value and each its uses. Each has its defects and its inutilities. No one in his sober senses would expect to find a preponderance of persons of the strictly practical turn of mind among professors of moral philosophy. If it were so the moral philosophy which they would inculcate in "studious youth" might not be deemed the most desirable kind for the instruction of the young. On the other hand no one could reasonably expect that a preponderance of the executive heads of great business enterprises would be found to be dreaming idealists. If it were so our earnest sympathy would probably have to be extended to the stockholders. The country is merely a great business enterprise and all of us are stockholders therein and what is intended to be pointed out is that, speaking generally persons of similar mental type tend to group themselves together, and that the unpractical group is known among us as "Democrats," also that unpractical people are not competent to administer a government. It is for this underlying reason that throughout history the conduct of the affairs of

government is found generally in the hands of those who have a practical bent of mind. But it is also true that from time to time, if there arise an excess of the "practical" in their conduct of affairs through too long a continuance of their being entrusted with power, the practical-minded men grow hide-bound—what is called today "machine politicians"—and thereupon they are turned out of office, and the dreamers are put in. The dreamers invariably wreck the entire State beginning from the very instant that they are entrusted with power by their idiotic choice of unsuitable agents. In despair at their incompetency, in horror at the interminable mess into which they get national affairs, the people turn to the now reproved and chastened "practical" party. In this country we have had seven awful years. No words can paint the insanity which has characterized the conduct of our public business. The people are dog-tired of it. The dreamers and idealists have, for the millionth time in the world's history, shown that they are unfit to govern. Only one thing could drive the people of the United States into continuing the Democratic party in power and that would be the capturing of the Republican Convention by some faction—whatever that faction was. You may mark my words if a faction prevail the cause is lost. The public has no use for either a "pacifist," or a "pussy-footer," or a "machine man" and the crime of nominating such a one should earn the vengeance of the gods. Millions will vote against any one of the three. The last Republican Convention, under considerable stress and strain, nominated a worthy man, but one who was so much of the type of what may be called "the better attributes" of his opponent that no reason appeared for making a change. Another such nomination by the Republican Convention will meet the same result. Or, should the Republican Convention nominate a man, however able or eminent in the party's councils, representing in his attributes a calculated reactionism, as surely as day follows night he will go down to defeat; he will not command the support of all the shades of opinion that constitute the party and the land. The nominee must be a man in whom the nation as a whole has confidence. The politicians, of a stripe, might hug themselves in glee at a factitious success in the convention but they would find that they had earned the curses of the land when the votes were counted.

The Republican party must therefore nominate a man not alone of approved executive capacity, but one who corresponds to the demands of the day. Who has been in touch with leaders of sane progress. Whose mind is acquainted with and not blindly opposed to liberal views, who is neither a machine politician nor a pacifistic-idealist nor a weakling, and who recognizes the business needs of the country and has the firmness to maintain them. Among the candidates Wood represents this need of the hour. Of him it cannot be said that he is steeped in commercialism. Nor that he is bound by golden chains to the chariot of capitalism. It cannot be said that he owes political allegiance to any mere group within the party. It cannot be said that he lacks either the ideals or the traditions of America and Americanism. Nor that he is subservient to the cunning demands of anarchy masquerading as liberalism. Nor that he has ever varied from his path to seek political advantage. Of him, however, it can be said that his ideals have ever been high, that his judgment of men has approved itself, that his firmness has never been distorted by obstinancy. That he comes by descent from a race of workers. That the petty vices of vanity, of love of power and of subservience to luxury are foreign to his being and his nature. That he has been tried out as the chief executive of two widely separate countries, each presenting peculiarly difficult problems of its own, and has met and dealt with those problems successfully. That he is a natural leader of men. That he is both relied upon and reliable. There is no progressive Republican who would fear for the cause of progress by reason of his election. There is no working man who does not know that his rights would be protected and fostered. There is no family man possessed of even the slightest amount of property—to stand between his family and the wolf at the door—that does not know that with him as President the anarchists who wish to take that property by violence will give it up as a bad job and turn to honest work instead of advocating murder and robbery for their own personal benefit. Nor is there any merchant, business man or manufacturer who would fear the destruction of his business through crime camouflaged as " liberalism." Nor the wrecking of both industry and labor for some preposterous dream. Nor is there anyone who would not know that decision in each instance would be on the merits of the question that

arose. Labor and capital are both fully conscious of the advantages of a straightforward, intelligent administration of national affairs. Each of them needs the security and protection which arise therefrom.

Reference has been made above to that trait of his character known as patience. It is worth considering for few traits are more valuable in an executive. Indeed to success as an executive it is well nigh indispensable. We also know that in him, patience is coupled with firmness and we know that this also is indispensable to successful administration.

Patience in an executive presupposes a hearing before decision, for an integral part of patience is the fair consideration of the merits of a controversy. It insures that error will not arise through ignorant haste and it imports freedom from hasty misjudgment of motives. Patience in an executive avoids unnecessary misunderstandings as well domestic as foreign. It eliminates the possibility of the angry mental attitude which arises from a feeling that representations have neither been entertained, considered nor understood. It is the antithesis of obstinancy and the handmaid of sane progress. If one were to add a palpable deduction to a great truth, it would be to say that there still abide in this world Faith, Hope and Charity, that the greatest of these is Charity, and that the outward and sane expression of Charity is Patience. If you couple with it executive ability and the capacity to wisely select associates and assistants, and add directness and firmness of character, broad experience in government, self-control and energy, you have come very near finding the man of the hour.

Let us then, to summarize, have a sane, and efficient Chief Executive that peace and prosperity arising from order and justice shall replace the pandemonium which has reigned for seven years.

Yours, etc.

CHAS. STEWART DAVISON.

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